



Wyoming Lender Alert

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September 2005

Steven Despain, District Director

Making a Difference for Small Business in Wyoming

Wheatland Fire Equipment

Wheatland Fire Equipment (WFE), a family owned business that started in the basement of Howard Cozad's home in 1983, recently completed its fourth expansion. Cozad, who was fire chief at the time, recognized the need of emergency responders for up-to-date equipment and respiratory protection. He seized the opportunity to meet the demand and, today, the business is owned and operated by Howard and his two sons, Larry and Garey. This family-owned business has demonstrated consistent growth in both sales and employees; are good community citizens and continue to sustain their expansion projects – both in terms of square footage occupied, number of employees and sales.

Howard Cozad was born in Wheatland, graduated Wheatland High and started the business in the basement of his home in 1983. Brothers Larry (born in Wheatland) and Garey (born in Casper) are both graduates of WHS. Larry was a career firefighter in Casper before joining the family business in 1992. After high school Garey went to the United States Naval Academy, earning a degree in Applied Science Management (hybrid engineering business degree). He was commissioned an officer in the United States Marines, specializing in logistics. He later graduated from CU with an M.B.A. and, in 1992 started the Colorado branch of WFE. In 1997 he was instrumental in consolidating WFE's operations to Wheatland and returned to help run

the business from his hometown. Today, Garey is the growing company's vice-president and chief executive officer, Howard serves as president and Larry is vice president of sales.



Their recent purchase of property at 2020 South Street in Wheatland, Wyoming gives WFE the square footage it needs to meet the growing demands of their business, and will create a total of up to fourteen new jobs, three immediately and eleven within the next five years. The expansion was facilitated through a program called Business Ready Communities administered by the Wyoming Business Council. The Town of Wheatland and the Wheatland Area Development Corporation (WADCO) received a grant allowing the Town to purchase the property from its previous owner and then conveyed it to WADCO who intended to market the facility to specific target industries with the specific criteria of creating new jobs. WADCO sold the property to WFE at fair market value, a transaction that included not only cash, but also taking WFE's former building at 1851 Oak in trade.

Wheatland Fire Equipment's ability to complete this transaction

was also made possible by a loan through the Small Business Administration. Garey Cozad said that the SBA has been instrumental in their success and that Resource Partners such as the Wyoming Small Business Development Center has, in the past, helped them make smart business decisions. Principals and staff at WFE have all benefited from a variety of SBA/SBDC workshops and seminars that are held in our community on a regular basis.



Larry Cozad has taught vehicle crash rescue to the local fire department on a volunteer basis for the past several years. Garey Cozad has served on local boards. Howard Cozad retired as a 30 year volunteer from the local fire department and WFE still has 9 employees that are firefighters in their communities including 3 in Wheatland. Ann Cozad (Howard's wife) has been an active member of Sigma Chi, a group that is always giving and Kathy Cozad (Garey's wife) spends countless volunteer hours helping victims of domestic violence through her association with Project Safe.

According to WADCO chairman Mike Daly, small businesses such as Wheatland Fire Equipment are the mainstay of our local economy. "Wheatland Fire Equipment has a substantiated history as an established business in this community, and their growth in employees and sales is a point of reference that helps us judge the impact of their business on our economy." Daly added that this project is a true success story and one that is a symbol of what WADCO and the Wyoming Business Council try to achieve with their economic development efforts.

WFE now employs 20 people locally and 12 throughout 6 states (Wyoming, Colorado, Washington, Montana, Oregon and Idaho). They market their respiratory protection, protective clothing and hydraulic rescue products primarily to fire departments and law enforcement agencies throughout the nation. Projections for 2004 are anticipated to reach up to \$15M in sales. WFE epitomizes what Wheatland defines as a successful small business and the fact that it is family owned makes it even more so.

Should you want to contact WFE phone them at (307) 322-5350 or FAX at (307) 322-2323 or email at garey@wfeonline.com. Their mailing address is P.O.Box 487, Wheatland, WY 82201.

6th Annual Wyoming Women's Conference

On Saturday, September 10, the Wyoming Women's Business Center will host the 6th Annual Wyoming Women's Conference, *Create Your Sustainable Future: From Solid Personal Financial Foundations to Lasting Business Success*. The Conference will be held at Headwaters Arts & Conference Center, 20 Stalnaker Street, Dubois.

The annual Wyoming Women's Conferences create opportunities for women and men from across the state to meet, network, and participate in a variety of workshops and discussions. This year's

conference is made possible by a grant from the American Express Foundation, Headwaters Arts & Conference Center, Bank of Jackson Hole, Dubois Branch, Wells Fargo Bank in Dubois, and the U.S. Small Business Administration.

The conference will be divided into two tracks: Personal Financial Management and Business. The Personal Financial Management Track will feature: Five Steps to Financial Security, Creating a Spending Plan and Health Care for Children, Increasing Assets/Decreasing Debt and Understanding Credit, and Long-Term Financial Security. The Business Track workshops include Increasing Profits by Adding Value, Secrets of eCommerce, Funding Sources, Government Contracting, and International Trade, and Sustainable Marketing.

Margo Covington of Santa Fe, NM, will present the luncheon keynote address, *Building Partnerships for Sustainable Business Practices*.

The fee for the conference is \$40 and includes continental breakfast, snacks, lunch, and a networking reception. A limited number of tables will be available for vendors to display and sell their products and services for an additional fee.

For a list of Dubois lodging options, visit www.wyomingwomen.org.

Conference lodging must be reserved by August 22.

You must register for the conference by Thursday, September 1. For registration and information call the Wyoming Women's Business Center in Laramie at 766-3084, toll-free in Wyoming at 888-524-1947, or go to www.wyomingwomen.org for a mail-in registration form. We do have a limited number of scholarships available. Please let us know if you need financial assistance for travel and registration expenses.

The Wyoming Women's Business Center provides equal opportunities for all people in the state without

regard to race, sex, color, creed, age, national origin, sexual identity, disability, economic, social or marital status, or political or religious beliefs.

New Versions of Form 4, SBA Form 4-Schedule A and SBA Form 4-I

SBA Form 4, (Application for Business Loan), SBA Form 4-Schedule A (Schedule of Collateral), and SBA Form 4-I (Lender's Application for Guaranty or Participation) have been renewed and are available on SBA's website at www.sba.gov/library. Previous versions of these forms are obsolete since they do not contain the changes incorporated in the revised versions. The changes to the forms include the following:

Form 4-I: This form must be completed by the lender for each 7(a) loan application that submits a Form 4. One of the changes to the form is the addition of a block asking the lender to indicate the small business loan applicant's North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code which identifies each type of small business and is used by SBA to establish size standards for "small" versus "not small." SBA financial assistance programs are only available to business borrowers that are determined to meet SBA's size standards for "small."

Form 4: The existing Form 4 asks for information concerning the applicant. One of the questions is about the applicant's other Government debt. As revised, the instructive language is re-phrased to provide clearer guidance to the applicant about what information to include in this section. We also have revised the instructive language regarding identification of assistance the borrower has received in completing Form 4. Another change in this form is that applicant will no longer be asked whether he or she is a Vietnam Era Veteran but instead will be asked to indicate whether he or she is a Service Disabled Veteran. Pursuant to Public Law 106-50, SBA

must report to Congress on loan activity for Service Disabled Veterans. We also have clarified the questions regarding exporting in order for SBA to better determine the number of businesses assisted by a 7(a) loan that export and the amount of export sales the loan will support. In addition, we have added a question to identify those SBA applicants that have received counseling or training from SBA.

Form 4, Schedule A:

(This is an optional form.) This form as revised requires the lender to list the manufacturer, make, model, etc. of only those personal property items to be taken as collateral that exceed \$5,000 in value. Previously, it was those items exceeding \$500. Therefore, the detailed listing will not include such items as personal computers, printers and so on and will be far less burdensome.

2006 SBA SMALL BUSINESS AWARD NOMINATIONS

You must have someone in mind for a small business award! Who has made the greatest impact in your community? Who would you like to highlight? Help us recognize outstanding small business leaders in your local community. Complete a simple letter nomination format and send it to us!

Please consider one or more potential categories:

- **Small Business Person of the Year:** For developing an outstanding, growing business; innovative product(s), increasing jobs, increasing sales, overcoming adversity, and community contributions;
- **Financial Services Champion of the Year;**
- **Home-Based Business Champion of the Year:** Those who have sought to improve the climate for home based businesses.;
- **Minority Small Business Champion of the Year;**
- **Small Business Exporter of the Year:** Significantly increased export sales and profits, encouraging other firms to export, increased jobs

through exports, and innovative methods of creating markets;

- **SBA Young Entrepreneur of the Year:** Must own and operate a business that was launched "small" by SBA size standards, received SBA assistance and has since grown into a large business;
- **Small Business Journalist of the Year;**
- **Veteran Small Business Champion of the Year;**
- **Women in Business Champion of the Year;**
- **Family-Owned Business of the Year.**

Reply by **November 4, 2005**, mail (or FAX 307-261-6535) your nomination to:

Beth Hink
Small Business Administration
100 East "B" Street
Federal Building, Suite 4001,
P.O. Box 44001
Casper, WY 82602-5013.

For more information, please contact Beth at (307) 261-6502 or email Elizabeth.hink@sba.gov. Self-nominations accepted. This format may be duplicated.

SBA will contact the nominator with details. Thanks for your support!

Success Stories! Everyone Has One!

SBA continuously looks for small business success stories. SBA searches out small businesses that have used our services, or the services of our Resource Partners – Small Business Development Centers NxLevel Classes, Women's Business Center, SCORE, etc. and then writes "Success Story" articles for publication. If you would like to share a small business success story with SBA contact:

Sharon Nichols
Public Information Officer
Wyoming District Office
Phone: 307-261-6508
Email: sharon.nichols@sba.gov

Express Loan Production -- Reminder

As easy as it is to produce an Express loan, don't forget to complete the IRS 4506-T Tax Verification Form. This must be kept in your loan file as verification you matched up the borrower's tax returns with the IRS 4506-T

The IRS 4506-T Form can be easily found and completed on the SBA web (www.sba.gov) page under Forms.

Only with the Express Loan Program is a lender permitted to Close and disburse a loan prior to receiving a response from IRS on the 4506-T Form.

For Express Loan Program questions call Steve Parker (307-261-6506 or Dave Denke 307-261-6523.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Sept. 6** - Women's Roundtable, Jackson
- Sept. 7** – Women's Roundtable, Casper
- Sept. 7** – Women's Roundtable, Dubois
- Sept. 8** - Women's Roundtable, Laramie
- Sept. 8** - Women's Roundtable, Worland
- Sept. 10** – Women's Conference, Dubois
- Sept 15** - Women's Roundtable, Powell
- Sept. 20** - Women's Roundtable, Cody

SBA HOME PAGE

www.sba.gov

SBA's CUSTOMIZED SITE FOR WYOMING

www.sba.gov/wy